

**INTRODUCTION OF WESTSLOPE CUTTHROAT TROUT INTO YORK
RANCH POND FOR CONSERVATION PURPOSES
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
DECISION NOTICE**

**Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Region Three, Bozeman
June 17, 2011**

Proposed Action

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) proposes to introduce westslope cutthroat trout into a private pond on the York Ranch in an effort to create a conservation brood source for future cutthroat trout restoration work. The likely source of fish to stock the pond will be York Gulch or other nearby streams with nonhybridized populations of westslope cutthroat trout. Once the fish in the pond become sexually mature, gametes will be collected and used in future conservation projects.

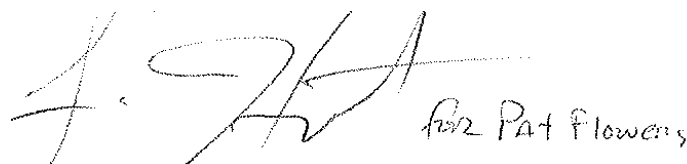
Montana Environmental Policy Act

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is required by the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) to assess significant potential impacts of a proposed action to the human and physical environment. In compliance with MEPA, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed for the proposed project by FWP and released for public comment on May 17, 2011.

Public comments on the proposed project were taken for 17 days (through June 2nd, 2011). The EA was mailed to 23 individuals and groups; legal notices were printed in the Montana Standard (Butte) and the Dillon Tribune newspapers. A draft EA was posted on the FWP webpage: <http://fwp.mt.gov/publicnotices/>. No comments were received.

Decision

Based on the Environmental Assessment, public comment, and benefits and risks associated with this project, it is my decision to go forward with the proposed action of introducing westslope cutthroat trout to the York Ranch Pond. I find there to be no significant impacts on the human and physical environments associated with this project. Therefore, I conclude that the Environmental Assessment is the appropriate level of analysis, and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pat Flowers", is written over a horizontal line.

Patrick J. Flowers, Region Three Supervisor
